

In the Claims

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Claim 1 (original): A method for conditioning a surface of a polishing pad after chemical-mechanical polishing of a semiconductor substrate with the pad surface, comprising exposing the pad surface to steam.

Claim 2 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the steam is jetted onto the pad surface to impact the surface with a pressure of from about 10 psig to about 20 psig.

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Claim 3 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the steam has a temperature of at least about 200°F as it impacts the surface.

Claim 4 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the steam is jetted onto the pad surface from a head which is displaced relative to the pad surface during the exposure of the pad surface to the steam.

Claim 5 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the pad has a contaminant associated therewith prior to the conditioning, and wherein a chemical agent suitable for reacting with the contaminant is within the steam during the exposure of the pad surface to the steam.

Claim 6 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein ammonium is within the steam during the exposure of the pad surface to the steam.

Claim 7 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein ammonium citrate is within the steam during the exposure of the pad surface to the steam.

Claim 8 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the chemical-mechanical polishing utilizes the pad to polish a copper-containing material; and wherein ammonium is within the steam during the exposure of the pad surface to the steam.

Claim 9 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the pad is rubbed against a conditioning stone during the exposure to the steam.

Claim 10 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the pad is rubbed against a conditioning stone prior to the exposure to the steam.

Claim 11 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein the pad is rubbed against a conditioning stone after the exposure to the steam.

Claims 12-35 (canceled).